continuous dialogue at offical and business levels between India and the U.K. A number of bilateral visits, both sides at official as well as at business level, have taken place in recent period, *inter-alia*, with a view to focus on improvement of bilateral trade.

(c) The commitment of both the countries for development of bilateral trade and economic relations is enshrined in the Delhi Declaration signed by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India and Prime Minister Blair during the latter's visit to India in January, 2002.

(d) Bilateral interactions at Ministerial and senior officials levels in the past few months in areas such as petroleum and natural gas, civil aviation, power, non-conventional energy sources, science and technology, agriculture and agri-products etc. has contributed to devising steps for boosting bilateral trade and investment.

Ban on import of items used for research

†2091. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that America has imposed a ban on items imported from foreign countries used in universities, research institutions, scientific research institutions;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that America has warned Russia for giving uranium fuel to India and said that it is against the commitment of nuclear non-proliferation treaty;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) The Government is not aware about such ban.

(b) Does not arise.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) to (e) The Government has seen reports about protest to Russia by USA within the ambit of the Nuclear Suppliers' Club, of which both are members, about Russia's supply of uranium fuel to India. However, there has been no protest made to the Government of India.

Achievement of export growth

2092. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether export promotion bodies are confident of achieveing higher export during 2002-2003 as compared to poor performance in the previous year;

(b) if so, whether during the last year, the export growth rate dipped to a negative 0.08 per cent;

(c) if so, what are the main points on which the export promotion council has expected that the export growth will be 12 per cent; and

(d) what efforts are being made to achieve this target?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (c) The total value of India's exports of merchandise goods for the year 2001-02 are estimated at US $ 43.6 billion which is 1.17% lower than the previous year mainly due to the global economic slowdown and the impact of September 11 events and its aftermath. For the fiscal year 2002-03, a target of 12% in dollar terms, has been fixed in consultation with Export Promotion Councils. The exports during the first quarter of 2002-03 have witnessed a growth of 11.29%. The world trade scenario has improved. Besides many measures have been taken to step up exports.

(d) Based on the Medium Term Export Strategy announced by the Deptt. of Commerce and the action plans prepared by the various Export Promotion Councils/Commodity Boards, specific product and market related strategies are implemented to enhance the export growth during current year. Further, in the Exim Policy 2002-07, a number of measures have been announced to promote exports which include additional features for Special Economic Zones, a scheme to reimburse certain admissible